

And I look forward to making my case to the American people that I understand that responsibility and look forward to assuming that responsibility on behalf of our people.

Finally, one of the things that convinced me to go into politics in the first place is that Government has a chance to help change a culture. And the culture that I aspire for America is one that I call the responsibility era, where people know clearly that there are certain responsibilities that come with citizenship. If you're a mother or a father, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. I like to remind people that in a responsibility era, that if you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth. There should be no doubt in your mind—the responsibility that it's not acceptable to change the books in a way that is illegal. In a responsibility era, education, for example, is that people have got to take responsibility for their schools. Government has got to be responsible for giving people more options in schools, by the way. But there's a responsibility that comes with making sure the education systems run well. There's a responsibility to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself.

And one of the responsibilities as President is understanding the strength of the country lies in the hearts and souls of the citizens. It's really not in the halls of our Government. See, that's not where the strength of the country is. It's in the souls of the people. And if you understand that, then you're able to utilize the great power

of the Presidency to rally that strength, to call people to a higher calling.

As I look around the room here, I see people who have done fantastic work about making the communities in which they live a better place, people who have heard the call to love a neighbor by supporting good education programs or good health programs, mentoring programs. Each of us has a responsibility, in my judgment, to help feed the hungry and house the homeless, love the lonely—part of being an American. And the President must understand that, that there's a responsibility to capture the American spirit and call people to a higher calling. And I look forward to doing that for 4 more years.

I want to thank you for your help. This is an important election. A lot turns on the election. And I've got a reason for wanting to serve 4 more years, and I appreciate you supporting me in that endeavor.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. at the River Club. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City; Mercer Reynolds, national finance chairman, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Al Hoffman, finance chairman, Republican National Committee; Lew Eisenberg, New Jersey co-chair, Bush-Cheney 2004; James Chao, father of Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao; Karen Hughes, former Counselor to the President; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Iraq *April 17, 2004*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolu-

tion of 2002 (Public Law 107-243), the Authorization for the Use of Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1), and

in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration. This report includes matters relating to post-liberation Iraq under section 7 of the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–338).

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 21.

Remarks to the 2004 National and State Teachers of the Year *April 21, 2004*

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Welcome to the Rose Garden.

I told you not to tell the Elvis story. [Laughter] She told it anyway, didn't she?

Every President since Harry Truman has presented this award, Teacher of the Year Award. And there's a good reason for that. When you're in the company of some of the Nation's finest citizens, our greatest teachers, you're in the company of people who give their hearts and their careers to improving the lives of children. You're in the company of the best of our country.

I want to congratulate the teachers who are here from around the country. It is a great experience for Laura and me to greet you in the Oval Office. I guess the word I would describe the teachers as they came through is, they're joyous people. There's such a joy that radiates on your face and in your character. And on behalf of our Nation, I want to thank you for what you do. You make a great contribution.

In spite of the fact that she told the Elvis story, the best decision I made was to marry a teacher. Laura is a great First Lady for our country, and I'm really proud of her.

Besides the distinguished teachers who are here, I see we've got some other distinguished citizens with us today. Gene Hickok is the Deputy Secretary of the De-

partment of Education. Thank you for coming, Gene. I'm glad you're here.

From the great State of Kansas, Senator Brownback and Congressman Dennis Moore—I'm honored you both are here. Thanks for coming. I appreciate the fact that Lindsey Graham from South Carolina is here and Congressman Gresham Barrett. Thank you both for coming. I see Maria Cantwell, Senator from the State of Washington, is with us today and Congressman George Nethercutt—appreciate you all being here.

I appreciate so very much the Governor of the great State of Rhode Island, and the first lady, Sue, is with us. Thank you both for being here today—honored you took time to come. I'm confident our honoree is really pleased you're here.

I appreciate the fact that Senator Chafee—Senator Linc Chafee and Senator Jack Reed have joined us. Thank you for coming. And Congressman Jim Langevin is with us as well. Good to see you, friend. I'm glad you're back.

I also, too, want to congratulate the National Teacher of the Year finalists: Keil Hileman from DeSoto, Kansas; Jason Fulmer from Graniteville, South Carolina—you've been there, haven't you, Senator?—that's good—[laughter]—Dennis Griner from Palouse, Washington; and of course, our honoree, Kathy Mellor.